

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 249930 TOSEC 160154

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN (KISSINGER, H. A.)

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REPATRIATES: PRESS GUIDANCE

REF: TOSEC 160011

FOR FUNSETH FROM ANDERSON

NO. 12

1. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, CLEARED BY DEPARTMENT, INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE, NSC AND WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE, WILL BE USED ON IF ASKED BASIS.

Q: HAVE YOU ANY COMMENT ON PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT IN A WEEKEND INTERVIEW THAT, AS FAR AS THE VIETNAMESE REPATRIATES ARE CONCERNED, "OUR OBLIGATION AS A COUNTRY HAS ENDED?"

A: YES. TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT, AS SOME REPORTS HAD IT, THAT PHRASE LEAVES A MISLEADING IMPRESSION. BUT IN THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT SAID IT, HE WAS UNDERSCORING WHAT THE TASK FORCE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAVE BEEN SAYING SINCE SEPTEMBER 30 -- THAT, ONCE THE VIETNAM THOUNG TIN ONE
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WAS REFITTED AND PROVISIONED, THE DECISION TO SAIL AND THE

VOYAGE ITSELF BECAME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VIETNAMESE
WHO DEMANDED THE SHIP BE MADE AVAILABLE AND WHO LEFT ON HER.

Q: DOES THAT MEAN THE U.S. WOULD NOT TAKE THE REPATRIATES
BACK IF THEY ARE NOT PERMITTED TO LAND IN VIETNAM?

A: NO. WE WOULD ACCEPT THEIR RETURN IF THEY DECIDED TO
COME BACK FOR ANY REASON AND WE HAVE SO INFORMED THEM.
AS THE PRESIDENT POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THEY DO NOT WANT
TO STAY UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES. INGERSOLL

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